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MONTANA HIGHWAY COMMISSION

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GVW UP

Income from Gross Vehicle Weight fees this year up until November shows an increase of 13.44% over the same period in 1958. Total amount collected in the ten months was $3,206,925.92. This was the state's share, as 5% of the fees is retained by the county in which it is collected.

Yellowstone County with $503,562.00 collected the highest amount in GVW fees, followed by Cascade with $270,262.00; Missoula with $205,184.00; Lewis and Clark with $177,966.00; Silver Bow with $132,129.00; Flathead with $139,039.00; and Gallatin with $112,392.00. Petroleum County collects the smallest amount - $6,853.00.

PERSONNEL

Frank Small division engineer at Glendive, will retire January 1st after forty years service with the Department.

Cato Butler has moved on from the job of assistant public information coordinator to that of safety coordinator. He will carry on the excellent program which was started early in 1959. Garry Garden remains with Cato and will handle statistics.

RIGHT OF WAY COSTS

During the ten months from January 1 to November 1, the Highway Department paid out a total of $3,704,840.00 for right of way. In addition it cost us $525,359.00 to remove and relocate utilities from the proposed right of way.

Right of way costs have increased considerably during the last three years due to the increase in tempo of the Interstate Highway Program. Its wider right of ways and controlled accesses have increased the cost of land and reimbursement for damages. Many times land cannot be purchased for the appraised value, then the court either by an appointed commission, or a jury stipulates the reimbursement. Our appraisals are realistic and every effort is made to pay fair prices. Each appraisal must be reviewed and approved by the Bureau of Public Roads.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Montana highway engineers have had more than their share of frustrations during '59, what with investigations, depletion of federal funds twice and the loss of many miles of highway during the earthquake. We are now preparing for a maximum effort in 1960 and will start the year off with bid lettings in January and February. Your highway department is anxious to build highways that will be a credit to Montana and serve the growing needs of the Treasure State. Toward this end we sincerely pledge our efforts for the coming year. We also hope that 1960 will be a fruitful year for our associates and friends, and that the coming holiday season will rekindle in all of us the true spirit of Christmas.

Christmas Greetings from the MONTANA HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT